

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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IGA-02 TRSE-00 /111 W  
-----079096 261053Z /23

P 260951Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2617  
DOD/ISA WASHDC  
INFO COMNAVTELCOM  
CINCUSNAVEUR  
NCS SIDI YAHIA  
COMNAVTRACOM KENITRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 4068

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MARR MO US  
SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF US NAVAL FACILITY SIDI YAHIA

REF: COMNAVTEL COM N10380 (DTG 111553Z APR 77 NOTAL)

1. THE FIRST OF THE THREE USNAVTELCOM FACILITIES IN MOROCCO TO BE CLOSED, SIDI YAHIA IS SCHEDULED FOR CLOSURE AND TURNOVER TO THE MOROCCANS ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 1977. WE HAVE BEEN IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH THE MOROCCAN NATIONAL DEFENSE ADMINISTRATION (NDA), WHICH HAS NOW ESTABLISHED A COMMITTEE CHARGED WITH WORKING OUT WITH THE U.S. AUTHORITIES THE MODALITIES OF THE RELEASE OF THE THREE INSTALLATIONS. WE HAVE BEEN ASSISTING THE NDA TO PLAN FOR THE NECESSARY TRAINING OF PERSONNEL TO ASSUME THE APPROPRIATE FUNCTIONING OF THE FACILITIES IN LIGHT OF THE INTENDED GOM USE THEREOF. IN THE CASE OF SIDI YAHIA, THE ROYAL AIR FORCES WILL TAKE OVER THE FACILITIES AS A "BEDROOM COMMUNITY" FOR THE FORMER  
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USAF BASE AT SIDI SLIMANE, WHICH IS CURRENTLY BEING REACTIVATED.

2. WITH THIS PURPOSE IN MIND, WE HAVE REVIEWED THE CLASS 3 AND 4 PROPERTY LISTS, IDENTIFYING 13 ITEMS DESIRED FOR TURNOVER TO MOROCCAN AUTHORITIES AND USG AGENCIES IN MOROCCO (NAVCOMMSTA SIDI YAHIA N11016 TO COMNAVTEL COM DTG

051640Z JUL 77 NOTAL). WE NOW HAVE ACCESS TO THE FAMILY HOUSING ASSETS LIST AND THE EXTENSIVE MINOR PROPERTY LIST, WHICH IS STILL SUBJECT TO FINAL U.S. NAVY REUTILIZATION

SCREENING. SUBJECT TO SUCH SCREENING, WE FIND THAT THERE IS COMPELLING FOREIGN POLICY JUSTIFICATION FOR THE TRANSFER OF ALL REMAINING ITEMS TO THE GOM AND, IN A SMALLER NUMBER OF CASES, TO USG AGENCIES NOW OPERATING IN MOROCCO. SECTION 402 OF TITLE IV OF THE FEDERAL PROPERTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ACT MAY BE PERTINENT.

3. AS A PRACTICAL MATTER THESE ITEMS ARE OF A NATURE TO FACILITATE THE SMOOTH TURNOVER AND OPERATION OF THE FUTURE MOROCCAN AIR FORCE SUB-BASE OR, IN THE CASE OF THOSE OF PRIORITY NEED TO USG AGENCIES HERE, TO DIRECTLY SUPPORT USG ACTIVITIES IN MOROCCO.

4. JUSTIFICATION: SINCE 1963 MOROCCO HAS PERMITTED THE UNTROUBLED PRESENCE OF U.S. NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES, WITH "PAYMENT" TAKING THE FORM OF OUR MAINTAINING THE KENITRA BASE AND RUNNING THE SMALL COMMUNICATIONS SCHOOL AT KENITRA. AT THE TIME HE WAS INFORMED OF THE CLOSURE PLANS EARLY THIS YEAR, KING HASSAN WITH NO HESTIATION ACCEDED TO THE U.S. REQUEST TO LOCATE A USAF GEODSS STATION IN MOROCCO. THERE ALSO REMAINS A GOOD CHANCE THAT MOROCCO UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD AGREE TO THE PRESENCE OF OTHER U.S. CONFIDENTIAL

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FACILITIES. MEANWHILE MOROCCO CONTINUES TO WELCOME U.S. NAVAL VISITS, INCLUDING THOSE OF NUCLEAR POWERED VESSELS.

5. FROM A BROADER POINT OF VIEW, MOROCCO'S STRATEGIC LOCATION WILL OBVIOUSLY CONTINUE TO BEAR ON OUR UNRESTRICTED ACCESS TO THE MEDITERRANEAN. POLITICALLY, MOROCCO SUPPORTS MODERATE POSITIONS IN THIRD WORLD COUNCILS, HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN COUNTERING SOVIET ADVANCES ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT, AND SEEKS A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT. IT PROVIDES FACILITIES FOR A VOA RELAY STATION BROADCASTING TO EASTERN EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST. ECONOMICALLY, MOROCCO IS A LEADING EXPORTER OF AND HAS VAST RESERVES OF PHOSPHATES, UPON WHICH WORLD (AND U.S.) DEPENDENCE WILL GROW IN YEARS TO COME. IT IS MOVING FORWARD TO EXTRACT URANIUM FROM PHOSPHATES IN COOPERATION WITH U.S. PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND U.S. BUSINESS PRESENCE IN MOROCCO IS GROWING IMPRESSIVELY.

6. IN SUM, TRANSFER OF THE MATERIAL IN QUESTION TO THE GOM WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A SMOOTH TRANSITION, THEREBY STRENGTHENING OUR RELATIONS WITH THIS STRATEGICALLY LOCATED, PRO-WESTERN ARAB COUNTRY AND TO FURTHERING SUCH IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY AIMS AS OUR REGIONAL SECURITY CONCERNS, A MIDDLE EAST

SETTLEMENT, AND BOLSTERING OF MODERATES IN THE AREA.

7. PROCEDURES: WE HAVE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE NDA OUR CONCERN THAT ANY MATERIAL THAT MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE TURNED OVER TO IT WOULD BE FOR THE SUPPORT OF CONTINUED USE OF THE FACILITIES. HENCE THE GOM WOULD HAVE TO ENSURE SECURITY TO PREVENT THEFT OR UNAUTHORIZED APPROPRIATION BY INDIVIDUALS. THE NDA FULLY CONCURS, ALTHOUGH WE WILL HAVE TO KEEP ITS FEET TO THE FIRE ON THIS ONE.

8. SINCE WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE USN WANTS ANY TURNOVER ON OVERRIDING FOREIGN POLICY GROUNDS TO BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STATE, WE ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT A JOINT STATE/NAVY/GOM INVENTORY AND TURNOVER ON THE SPOT THAT WOULD MAKE THE EMBASSY CONFIDENTIAL

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IN EFFECT THE TRANSFER AGENT TO THE GOM AND PERMIT THE RETENTION OF PRIORITY ITEMS NEEDED BY USG AGENCIES OPERATING IN MOROCCO.

9. WOULD APPRECIATE URGENT REPLY TO PERMIT ORDERLY CLOSURE OF SIDI YAHIA. SUBJECT TO THOROUGH REVIEW OF SITUATION OF BOUKNADEL AND KENITRA, WE FORESEE THAT SIMILAR CONDITIONS MAY WELL OBTAIN IN THEIR CASES.  
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